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A new antwren from northeastern Brazil

by D. M. Teixeira and L. P. Gonzaga

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In the early months of 1979, the Ornithological Section of the Museu Nacional began field work in the residual Atlantic Forests of northeastern Brazil. Our main goal was to locate and study the nominate form of the Razor-billed Curassow *Mitu mitu*, the most endangered Brazilian member of the Cracidae. Some areas of Alagoas were visited, including the "Serra Branca", county of Murici (c. 9° 15'S, 35° 50'W), a forest located on the lower slopes of the coastal "Chapada da Borborema" at 550m.

It was quite a surprise that our researches at "Serra Branca" led to the discovery of birds never reported north of the São Francisco river and, above all, to undescribed species. In another paper (Teixeira & Gonzaga, in press), we describe a new *Philydor* (Furnariidae) and now we describe a new Formicariid of the genus *Terenura*, naming it in honour of Dr. Helmut Sick, who introduced us to ornithology. For all references on colours we used Villalobos & Villalobos (1947), with citation of the respective code.

Orange-bellied Antwren *Terenura sicki* sp. nov.

Holotype. Museu Nacional-UFRJ No. 32048. Inactive ♀, from "Serra Branca", Murici, Alagoas, northeastern Brazil (c. 9° 15'S, 35° 50'W), collected 7 February 1979.

Distribution. Known only from the type locality. The first *Terenura* from northeastern Brazil.

Description of Holotype. Crown with black and pale yellowish buff (OOY-16-6°) bordered feathers, with a streaked aspect. The superciliaries, face and auriculars also pale yellowish buff, the last 2 lightly dotted with black. Sides of neck olive grey (OOY-12-3°). Mantle, rump and upper tail coverts chestnut (0-9-8°); tail olivaceous grey (0-8-1°). Lesser and median upper wing coverts black with light apical grey (0-13-1°) spots; greater wing coverts plumbeous (0-7-0) bordered with buff (0-16-5°). Primaries and secondaries ashy-black (0-6-1°) with grey borders and with a whitish basal stripe on the inner web. Tertiaries also ashy-black, but bordered with chestnut; scapulars as the mantle. Wing lining and under wing coverts whitish. Throat whitish orange (OOY-16-9°) slightly dotted with black. Breast the same, but almost plain and shaded towards orange (OOY-16-9°), underparts plain orange (0-16-11°). Iris brown, mandible brown, maxilla plumbeous, tomlia pearl grey, tarsus plumbeous.

Measurements of Holotype. Exposed culmen 11 mm; wing (flat) 43 mm; tail 40 mm; tarsus 15 mm; total length 110 mm. Weight 6.5 g. Wing formula as

in *Terenura maculata* (primaries numbered from inner to outer): p7, p6 and p5 are the longest primaries and are about the same size; p8 is slightly shorter than p7 and about the same size as p4; p9 is 3 mm shorter than p8 and p10 is almost 9 mm shorter than p9. Compared with the series of *T. maculata* studied (Table 1), the measurements of *T. sicki* show no significant difference.

TABLE 1
Measurements (mm) of *Terenura sicki* sp.nov. and *Terenura maculata* ♀♀ compared

	<i>Terenura maculata</i> ♀♀ (n=11)		<i>Terenura sicki</i> (holotype)	
	\bar{x}	SD		
Wing (flat)	39.5-46	42.9	2.35	43
Tail	41-49	44.2	2.31	40
Tarsus	14-18	15.8	3.00	15
Exposed culmen	11-13	11.9	0.7	11

Diagnosis. Differs from all other *Terenura* in its conspicuous orange underparts. The general pattern of its plumage resembles *T. maculata*, which can be distinguished from *T. sicki* by the pale yellow (Y-19-6°) underparts, its light olive (YYO-9-7°) rump contrasting with the back, and by the white lesser upper wing coverts. Additionally, the immature of *T. maculata* is easily distinguishable from the adult *T. sicki* by its strong olivaceous tinge, the slightly streaked pileum and breast, and by the underparts being pale yellowish suffused with olive.

The other 4 species of the genus *Terenura* are Amazonian in range and are quite distinct in pattern from *T. sicki* and *T. maculata*. All of them show a plain pileum and in some the mantle and underparts are completely diverse in colour (see Meyer de Schauensee 1970).

Additional remarks. *T. sicki* seems to be an endemic of the middle-altitude forests of northeastern Brazil. This probably could explain its late discovery since only the coastal lowlands have as yet been well explored. Like *T. maculata*, *T. sicki* being arboreal and inhabiting the upper strata, it is difficult to locate. We saw it only 4 times. With its small size, it is able to move through the dense foliage looking for food amongst the leaves and between the debris fixed to the branches. Its diet includes small insects (Coleoptera, Blattaria), as the stomach contents of the holotype confirm. As true of many other Formicariidae, *T. sicki* often joins mixed flocks. Its vocalization seemed to us to be very similar to that of *T. maculata*, a quick sequence of notes "thú, ti-ti thú, ti-ti thú, . . .".

The avifauna of the forests of northeastern Brazil is very complex. There is well marked sympatry of meridional and Amazonian species as well as a core of endemic birds, the latter being more closely related to either Amazonian or to Atlantic Forest taxa. *T. sicki* is an example of the latter case, being apparently closely related to *T. maculata* from eastern Brazil (Espírito Santo and eastern Minas Gerais to Santa Catarina) to Paraguay and northeastern Argentina in Misiones (*vide* Pinto 1978). The 2 are allopatric in range, replacing each other at the São Francisco River, and compose a superspecies. The same is true of many other birds from Alagoas (Teixeira & Gonzaga in press; Pinto 1954).

The restricted known range of *T. sicki* raises doubts about its survival, as the State of Alagoas has had its original 35% of forested area reduced to 10%

since 1938 (Sick & Teixeira 1979). In any case, the establishment of the first protected areas for the northeastern Atlantic Forests is an urgent need.

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African Reed Warblers in northern Nigeria; morphometrics and the taxonomic debate

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African Reed Warblers *Acrocephalus baeticatus* are widely distributed over much of southern and east-central Africa, but are apparently more local in the northern tropics (Hall & Moreau 1970). The discovery on the shores of Lake Chad of a population of *A. baeticatus* (formerly believed to be *A. dumetorum*—Ash *et al.* 1967) and the suggestion that *A. baeticatus* be considered conspecific with *A. dumetorum* (Fry *et al.* 1974), together with Clancey's (1975) reclassification of *A. baeticatus* as 2 parapatric species (*A. baeticatus* and *A. cinnamomeus*) has resulted in renewed debate with regard to the taxonomy of this difficult group (Dowsett & Lemaire 1976, Fry & Ferguson-Lees 1977, Devillers & Dowsett-Lemaire 1978).

Until recently African Reed Warblers were known from only 3 localities in Nigeria; at Malamfatori (Lake Chad), at Serti in southeast Nigeria and at Ibadan in the southwest (Elgood 1982). The newly discovered population at Jekara, some 30 km ENE of Kano, Nigeria (Wilkinson & Aidley 1982) is of interest in that it lies between the Lake Chad population, previously described as *A. baeticatus hopsoni* and thought to represent a unique gene pool (Fry *et al.* 1974), and the more southerly Nigerian populations, presumably *A. c. cinnamomeus* (see Clancey 1975, and maps in Fry *et al.* 1974, and Fry & Ferguson-Lees 1977).

As part of a larger study of the avifauna of Jekara Dam (12°40'N, 8°10'E), mist netting was undertaken, normally twice monthly, from October 1981 to October 1982, in paths cut in the *Typha*-dominated waterside vegetation. African Reed Warblers were caught in every month from October 1981 until June 1982, and again in October 1982. These were distinguished from the